

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-31 (Canceled)

Claim 32 (Currently Amended) A method for ~~silencing endogenous genes by the~~ introduction of inhibitory RNA in the cytoplasm of plant cells, said method comprising:

- a) introducing into said plant cell, a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco mosaic virus ~~a satellite RNA virus~~, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA₁ or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA₁ and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus, and wherein part or all of the coat protein encoding gene of satellite tobacco mosaic virus has been deleted; ~~wherein said inhibitory RNA comprises sense RNA;~~ and
- b) introducing a corresponding helper virus into said plant cell.

Claims 33-37 (Canceled)

Claim 38 (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, ~~wherein said viral RNA vector is derived from STMV and~~ wherein said helper virus is tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 39 (Original) A method for the introduction of inhibitory RNA into the cytoplasm of plant cells, said method comprising:

- a) introducing into said plant cell a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco necrosis virus, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA, or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus; and

- b) introducing a corresponding helper virus into said plant cell, wherein said helper virus is derived from tobacco necrosis virus and comprises a coat protein gene of tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 40 (Original) The method of claim 39, wherein said satellite RNA virus is satellite tobacco necrosis vector strain 1 or 2 and said helper virus is derived from TNV-A.

Claim 41 (Original) The method of claim 39, wherein said satellite RNA virus is STNV-C and said helper virus is derived from TNV-D.

Claim 42 (Currently Amended) The method of any one of claims 32, ~~34~~, 38, ~~and~~ 39 to 41 and 53 to 60, wherein said plant is selected from *Nicotinia* spp, *Oryza sativa*, *Zea Mays*, *Brassica* spp., *Gossypium* spp., *Triticum* spp., *Arabidopsis* spp. or *Petunia* spp.

Claim 43 (Currently Amended) A kit for ~~silencing endogenous genes by~~ introduction of inhibitory RNA in the cytoplasm of a plant cell, said kit comprising

a) a viral RNA vector derived from ~~a satellite RNA virus~~, satellite tobacco mosaic virus, wherein said vector comprisesing said inhibitory RNA, or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus, and wherein part or all of the coat protein encoding gene of satellite tobacco mosaic virus has been deleted or which comprises said inhibitory RNA, wherein said inhibitory RNA comprises sense RNA; and

b) a corresponding helper virus.

Claims 44-48 (Canceled)

Claim 49 (Currently Amended) The kit of claim 43, ~~wherein said viral RNA vector is derived from STMV and~~ wherein said corresponding helper virus is tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 50 (Original) A kit for introduction of inhibitory RNA into the cytoplasm of a plant cell, said kit comprising:

- a) a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco necrosis virus, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA, or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus; and
- b) a corresponding helper virus derived from tobacco necrosis virus, said virus comprising the coat protein gene of tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 51 (Original) The kit of claim 50, wherein said satellite RNA virus is satellite tobacco necrosis vector strain 1 or 2 and said corresponding helper virus is derived from TNV-A.

Claim 52 (Original) The kit of claim 50, wherein said satellite RNA virus is STNV-C and said corresponding helper virus is derived from TNV-D.

Claim 53 (New) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 2 from the nucleotide at position 5443 to the nucleotide at position 5518.

Claim 54 (New) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 5 from the nucleotide at position 5430 to the nucleotide at position 5505.

Claim 55 (New) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 12.

Claim 56 (New) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 4 from the nucleotide at position 1 to the nucleotide at position 197.

Claim 57 (New) The kit of claim 43, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 2 from the nucleotide at position 5443 to the nucleotide at position 5518.

Claim 58 (New) The kit of claim 43, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 5 from the nucleotide at position 5430 to the nucleotide at position 5505.

Claim 59 (New) The kit of claim 43, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 12.

Claim 60 (New) The kit of claim 43, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 4 from the nucleotide at position 1 to the nucleotide at position 197.